

October 14, 2009

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Broadband industry Practices (WC Docket No 07-52)

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

Innovation is one of the hallmarks of the American economy and a key to creating jobs and generating wealth. Michael Porter, the renowned Harvard Business School professor, calls innovation "the central issue in economic prosperity."

During economic downturns, such as the recession facing Nevadans today, it can be tempting to turn to government to thrust regulations on industries and commerce and tweak the marketplace in hopes of boosting the economy.

But policymakers should exercise caution when considering regulations on business. While there is a role for government in ensuring fair completion in the marketplace, restrictions on business often thwart innovation, diminish job creation and reduce U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace.

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, the U.S. ranks third in innovation, behind Japan and Switzerland and tied with Finland. But we do not enjoy that strong position by divine right. Sweden, Germany, Taiwan and others are right behind us. China, the world's second largest economy, is boosting its innovative capacity. Throughout Europe and Asia, countless nations are scaling back regulations and enacting incentives to fuel innovation and economic growth.

Thankfully, here in Nevada, and across the U.S., a number of industries are bucking the trend of the slow economy, unfettered by burdensome regulations and left free to innovate. One of the best examples is wireless communications. Maybe it's the need to stay connected, even in tough economic times, which is driving the growth, but that's only part of the picture.

There's much we can learn from the wireless industry as we strive to shake off the recession blues. In 2008, more than 270 million U.S. consumers enjoyed wireless service, using 2.2 trillion minutes. We enjoy cutting-edge technologies, e-commerce apps and a wide-ranging choice in providers and service plans.

All consumers benefit from stronger, faster networks and cutting-edge devices and applications. The smart phone in your pocket is an incredible tool that businesses can use to their advantage. The ability to track inventory, manage shipments, review budgets and keep an eye on the market is crucial.



The success of wireless is the result of a consumer-driven industry that has faced few regulations. Free to innovate, it has invested in developing new products and processes, resulting in the innovations that we enjoy. Moreover, innovation and investment are just what our country needs right now.

With more than 40,000 applications and more coming online daily, wireless is innovating in real time. And consumers benefit from choices in carriers (in over 95 percent of the country, consumers have at least three carriers from which to choose) and service plans.

Businesses are using wireless technology to stay competitive. We encourage our policymakers to look at what can happen when competition is allowed to flourish, when infrastructure investment is encouraged, all in a business climate free from burdensome regulations. The freedom to innovate and invest works for all Americans, and is critical to our economic vitality and quality of life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Kurkul". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Doug Kurkul, CEO
Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce